

Message Text

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PAGE 01 VALLET 01470 141722Z
ACTION EUR-02

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 INR-01 PA-01 /005 W
----- 125348 /47

P R 141502Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY VALLETTA
TO USINFO WASHDC PRIORITY
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 7128
USMISSION USNATO

UNCLAS VALLETTA 1470

FOR IOP/M

E.O. 11652: N/A
SUBJ: MEDIA REACTION: NATO DPC

REF: EUR WF WIS-134

EDITORIAL PAGE OF SUNDAY TIMES OF MALTA CARRIED FULL TEXT OF
DPC MINISTERIAL COMMUNIQUE PLUS FOLLOWING EDITORIAL ENTITLED
"PEACE THROUGH STRENGTH":

BEGIN TEXT: ON THIS PAGE, WE PUBLISH THE COMMUNIQUE ISSUED
AT THE END OF A TWO-DAY MEETING OF FOREIGN (SIC) MINISTERS OF NATO
COUNTRIES HELD LAST WEEK IN BRUSSELS. THE TEXT OF THE
COMMUNIQUE PROJECTS THE REALITY OF THE PRESENT POSITION OF
THE FREE WORLD.

THE BACKGROUND TO THE NEED FOR MAINTAINING PEACE THROUGH
STRENGTH IS THE INCREASING MILITARY POWER OF THE SOVIET
UNION. THE INCREASE IN SOVIET ARMS INCLUDES "NEARLY 2,000
TACTICAL AIRCRAFT SINCE THE EARLY 1960S, AND INCREASE IN
DIVISIONS FROM 141 TO 168 AND THE OBVIOUS, DURING THAT PERIOD,
INCREASE IN THE SOPHISTICATION OF WEAPONS AS WELL AS THE
INSTITUTIONAL CAPABILITY OF THE SOVIET UNION TO PRODUCE ADDI-
TIONAL WEAPONS OF INCREASING CAPABILITY AND SOPHISTICATION".
THESE ARE SOME OF THE FACTS LAID BEFORE THE NATO FOREIGN
MINISTERS BY MR. DONALD RUMSFELD, THE AMERICAN SECRETARY OF
DEFENCE.

MR. RUMSFELD LATER DESCRIBED THE SITUATION MORE DRAMATICALLY
WHEN, SPEAKING TO JOURNALISTS, HE SAID: "WHEN ONE GOES BACK
TO THE POST WORLD WAR II SOVIET UNION AND COMPARES IT WITH
TODAY, IT IS CLEAR THAT THEY HAVE MOVED FROM AN OX-CART SOCIETY
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TO A RATHER SOPHISTICATED MILITARY POWER. NOW THEY ARE THERE,

AND THEY DON'T AGREE WITH WHAT WE AGREE WITH IN TERMS OF THE DIGNITY OF INDIVIDUALS, IN TERMS OF FREEDOM OF THE PRESS, FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY, FREEDOM OF SPEECH, FREEDOM OF RELIGION. IT SEEMS TO ME THAT IT IS PERFECTLY APPROPRIATE, WHILE WE ARE MAINTAINING DEFENCE AND DETERRENCE AT AN ADEQUATE LEVEL TO ASSURE PEACE AND STABILITY, THAT WE ENGAGE IN NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION TO TEST WHETHER WE CAN BE SUCCESSFUL IN FINDING AREAS OF AGREEMENT THAT, FOR WHATEVER REASON, ARE IN OUR COMMON INTEREST. IT SEEMS TO ME THAT WHAT YOU MUST DO IS YOU MUST MAINTAIN YOUR DEFENCE CAPABILITIES, ASSURE THAT THE DETERRENCE IS HEALTHY AND SIMULTANEOUSLY ENGAGE IN THOSE DISCUSSIONS AND SEE IF IT IS POSSIBLE TO FIND SOME AREAS OF AGREEMENT. IF IT IS, WONDERFUL. IF IT ISN'T, BE PATIENT AND KEEP WORKING AND TRY TO ACHIEVE THEM".

THAT IS THE BALANCE ON WHICH WORLD PEACE HANGS AT THE PRESENT MOMENT AND AS FAR AS ONE CAN LOOK INTO THE FUTURE. IT IS TRUE OF MALTA, AS IT IS TRUE OF THE UNITED STATES, THAT NEITHER ONE NOR THE OTHER CAN MAINTAIN THEIR FREEDOM IN ISOLATION. NOR IS PEACE POSSIBLE IN ISOLATION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AS THE PRESENT SOCIALIST GOVERNMENT SEEMS TO THINK WITH ITS REFERENCE (IN THE PRESIDENT'S SPEECH AT THE OPENING OF PARLIAMENT) TO MALTA BECOMING "A TRULY FREE NATION" WHEN THE MILITARY FACILITIES AGREEMENT WITH BRITAIN EXPIRES. THE GOVERNMENT GIVES NO INDICATION WHATEVER OF WHAT IS TO HAPPEN THEN. THE "FORMIDABLE TASK" IN 1979 IS NOT MERELY ONE OF PROVIDING NEW EMPLOYMENT, FORMIDABLE IN ITSELF AS THAT MAY BE, BUT ALSO OF SECURING THE FREEDOM OF THE PEOPLE OF THESE ISLANDS AMONG THE FIFTEEN NATIONS OF THE WESTERN ALLIANCE WITH WHOM THE EUROPEAN PEOPLE OF THESE ISLANDS SHARE THE SAME IDEALS OF FREEDOM. END TEXT.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, MEETINGS, REGIONAL DEFENSE ORGANIZATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976VALLET01470
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760460-0505
From: VALLETTA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761243/aaaabkxw.tel
Line Count: 93
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: schwenja
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14 JUN 2004 by hattaycs>; APPROVED <19 AUG 2004 by schwenja>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MEDIA REACTION: NATO DPC
TAGS: MILI, SOPN, MT, NATO, DPC
To: USIA
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006